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## Kiwi - A New Fruit for the Table

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# KIWI

## . . . . A New Fruit for the Table

by Michael K. Deardorff and Allan R. Beck

THE "KIWI" is one of several new subtropical fruits now available to consumers. The name "Kiwi" may suggest the strange looking birds from New Zealand, or perhaps a bottle of shoe polish. But Kiwi's other name, "Chinese Gooseberry," may indicate it's an exotic fruit to be used in a pie.

The Kiwi is rich brown and comparable in size to a somewhat flattened lemon. The outer skin is furry and the inner flesh is a pale chartreuse. The small seeds in the center are crunchy and edible.

A number of unfamiliar tropical and subtropical fruits have become available on many supermarket fresh fruit counters throughout the Midwest the past few years. These new fruits have been "foreign" to consumers in name, looks, taste, and use.

Kiwi flavor has a mild taste-blend reminiscent of other well-known fruits such as strawberry, pineapple, banana and fig. Despite the unusual name and unique appearance of this fruit, the sweet taste and blend of flavors soon dispel any reservations.

The Kiwi may be sliced fresh as a cereal topping for breakfast as one would use bananas or strawberries, or it may be combined with other fresh salad fruits such as grapes and pineapples. To serve fresh, simply cut the fruit in half and eat with a spoon, or peel away the outer skin and cut the fruit into slices. Cream or sugar may be added to taste.

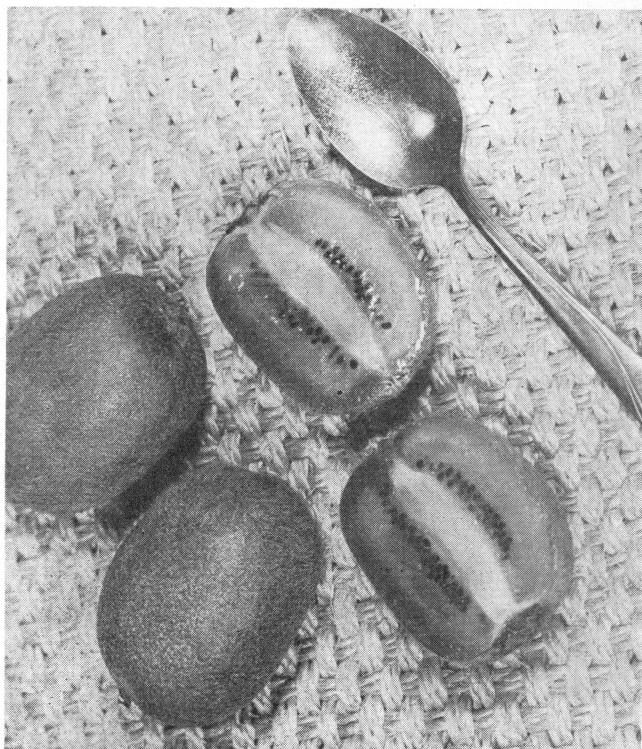
The Kiwi fruit may also be used as a pie filling or an ice cream topping, and even a meat tenderizer. Rubbing an inexpensive cut of steak with a peeled Kiwi will enhance the flavor, as well as tenderize the meat. Slices of Kiwi make an unusual garnish for pies, cakes, or puddings. For use in gelatin salads, cook the Kiwi first as the raw fruit will prevent gelatin from setting.

Optimum storage temperature is about 40 degrees F., making the Kiwi an excellent item to keep on hand in the refrigerator. Firm fruits should be allowed to ripen or soften to the touch before being refrigerated. Thus, Kiwi fruit will always be ripe and ready to serve.

The Kiwi fruit takes its name from the New Zealand bird and major producing areas are located in New Zealand. However, California has recently become an important commercial producing area in this country. Kiwis are trellised similarly to grapes in a vineyard. The Kiwi contains small amounts of several vitamins and is high in vitamin C.

A survey conducted at Iowa State University on potential consumers for "identification and familiarity" indicated that slightly less than one-fifth of the individuals could identify the Kiwi, and even fewer knew how to use it.

Good crop production practices along with widespread marketing of the Kiwi have provided a good supply for Midwest markets this fall and winter. Price of the Kiwi is generally comparable to that of two lemons.



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